

The President's Daily Brief

15 November 1973

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

15 November 1973

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Implementation of four items of six-point cease-fire set to begin today. Israel may be preparing to test blockade of the Bab al Mandab. Only minor cease-fire violations on both fronts yesterday, as both sides improve fortifications. Arab summit due in Algiers later this month. Dayan says Israel did not think there would be war until morning of October 6. EC political directors work on joint demarche to the Arabs. (Page 1)

Assessment of performance of US and Soviet advanced weapons used in the war. (Page 4)

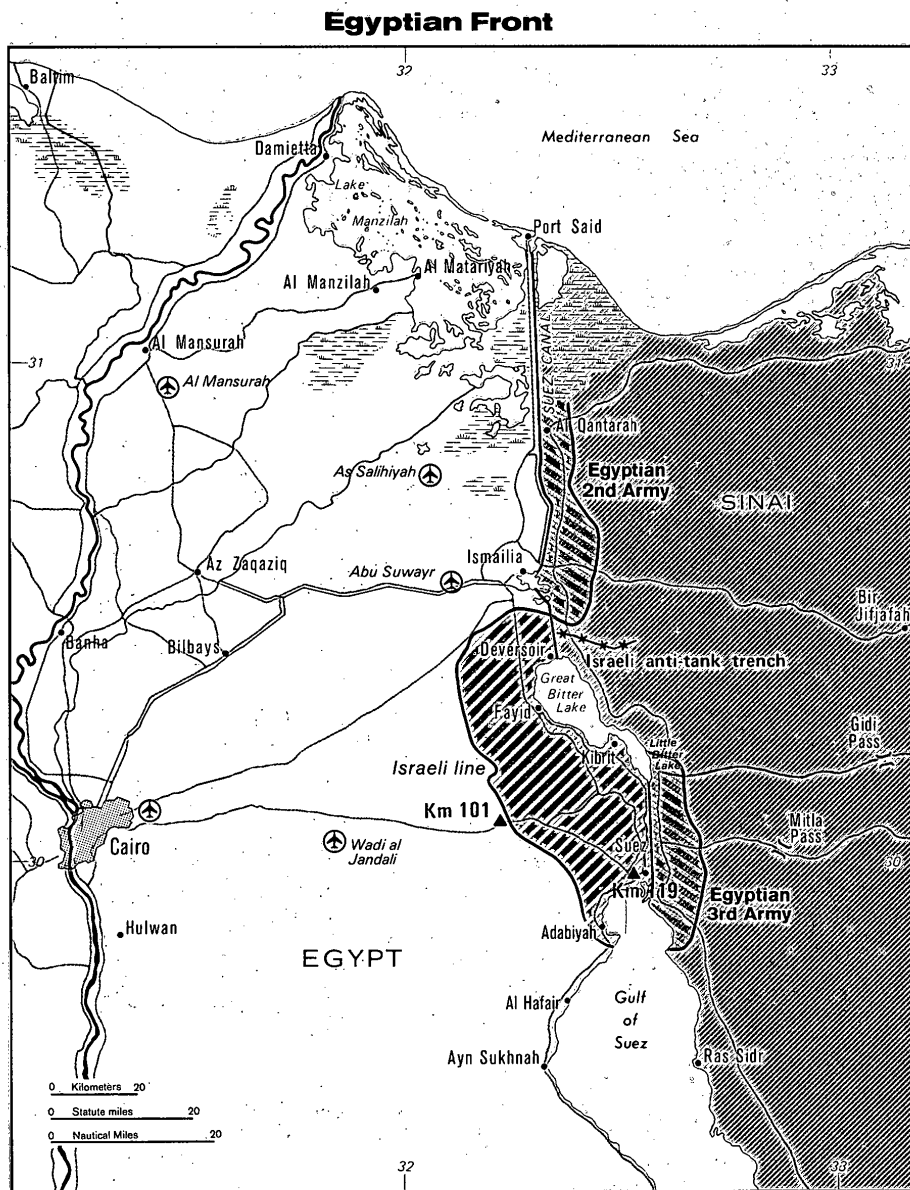
Disputes among top Chinese leaders have intensified. (Page 5)

Khmer Communists once again tightening hold over Phnom Penh's overland supply lines. (Page 6)

Notes on USSR-China, South Korea, [redacted] West Germany - Czechoslovakia, West German economic performance, and Uganda-USSR appear on Pages 7 and 8.

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ARAB STATES - ISRAEL

Egyptian and Israeli representatives agreed yesterday in a meeting at Kilometer 101 that implementation of four items of the six-point cease-fire accord of November 11 would get under way today.

The exchange of prisoners of war started this morning under the supervision of the International Red Cross, as planes began making direct flights between Egypt and Israel repatriating the prisoners of war. The exchange is to be completed within eight days.

The two sides also agreed that Israel would turn over the checkpoints at Kilometers 101 and 119 to United Nations Forces this morning. This element of the agreement could still cause trouble, however. Tel Aviv interprets the arrangement as providing for Israeli control of the Cairo-Suez road between the two checkpoints; a UN press spokesman in Cairo said the Israelis should now "leave the task of controlling the road to the UN." The spokesman said it would be up to the local UN commander to decide whether additional UN checkpoints should be set up on the road. The Israelis established three new checkpoints along the road between Kilometers 101 and 119 Tuesday night.

The Egyptian-Israeli accord also provides for the supply of nonmilitary goods to the Egyptian Third Army on the east bank of the canal, and the daily provisioning of food and water to Suez city. The evacuation of the wounded from the Third Army and Suez city is to begin Friday. The UN will provide drivers for the resupply of Suez, and Israeli representatives will be permitted to examine the goods. Israel also agreed not to impede the movement of nonmilitary material to the Third Army.

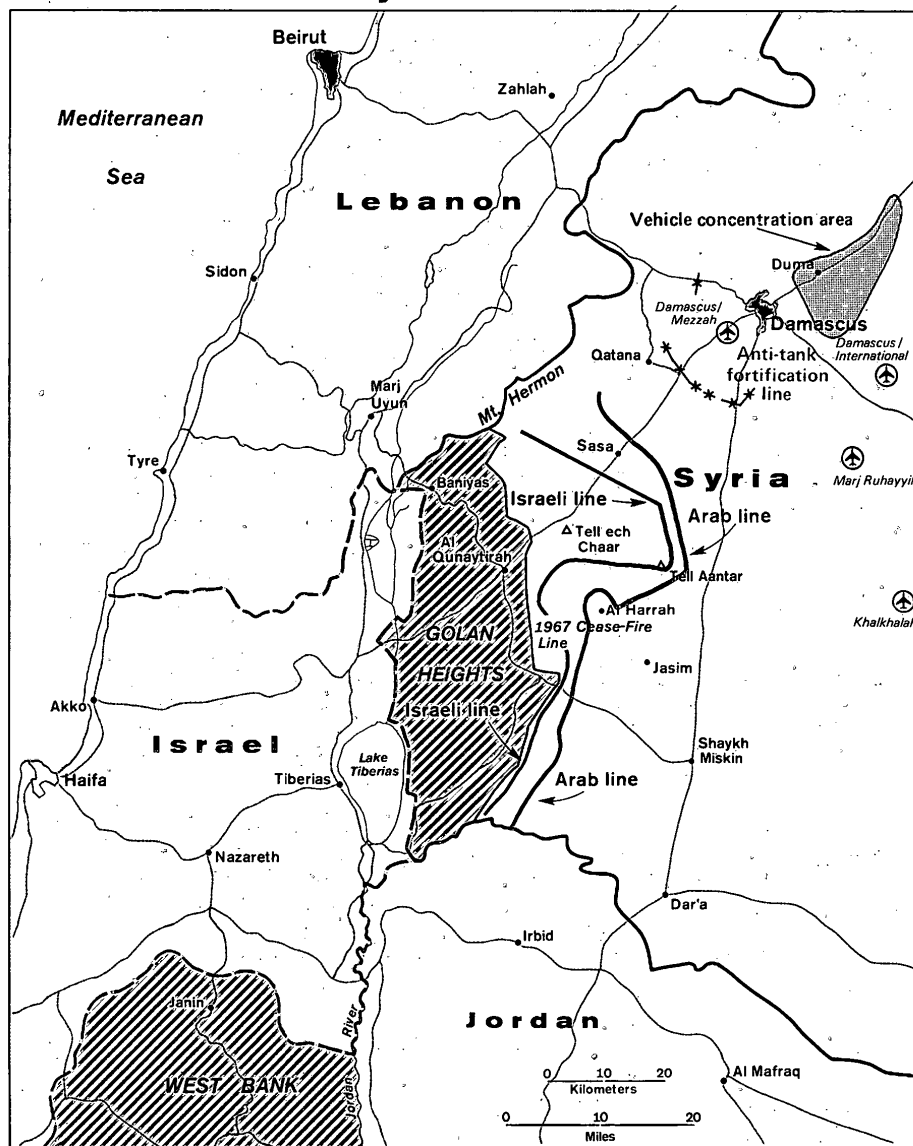
The Israeli press on November 14 said that Tel Aviv may be preparing in the near future to test the blockade of the Bab al Mandab, the southern entrance to the Red Sea. Eleven Israeli ships from the Far East are said to be en route to Elat, where another 13 ships are reportedly ready to sail. Yesterday, an

that although the timing had not been set for any test, "everyone" agreed there must be one. With the release of Israeli POWs--Tel Aviv's highest priority demand--apparently resolved by the exchange that began today, the Israelis may now feel in a better position to devote more attention to the situation in the Bab al Mandab.

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Syrian Front




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Minor cease-fire violations were reported on both fronts yesterday. 



There were several exchanges of fire, including artillery, on the Syrian front west of Sasa yesterday. Radio Jerusalem charged Damascus with violations of the cease-fire agreement in this area. The Syrians apparently pushed a salient into Israeli lines west of Sasa last week, and Israel has been making attempts to reduce it. There were no reports of aircraft activity over the Syrian front yesterday.



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[REDACTED]

An Arab summit conference will be held in Algiers, according to an Arab League spokesman. The date of the meeting is still uncertain, with the press mentioning both November 26 and 28. Prior to the meeting of the heads of state, the foreign ministers will gather in Algiers or Cairo on November 24. According to Al Ahram, the foreign ministers will prepare an agenda for the summit session, as well as review the war effort, use of oil, relations with other countries based on their attitude toward the Arab cause during the conflict, and Arab economic activities and propaganda.

Reacting to changes in the Knesset and the press about Tel Aviv's lack of preparedness in the face of the Egyptian-Syrian attack, Defense Minister Dayan told army officers on the Syrian front last night that "until the morning of the Day of Atonement, I did not think there would be war, nor was anyone else of this opinion." Dayan said that when [REDACTED] on the morning of October 6 [REDACTED] indications that war was in the offing, Israel began to call up its reserves.

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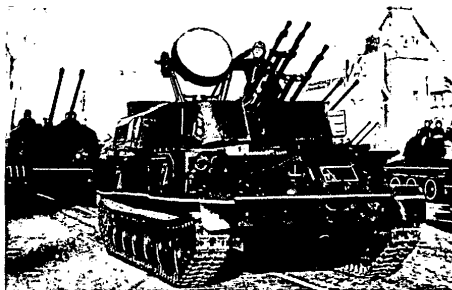
The political directors of the EC countries have been working on a proposed joint demarche to the Arabs. According to a senior West German official, the effort is the result of the increasing irritation of some of the EC member states with Arab behavior. The demarche is intended as a follow-up to the EC's Middle East declaration of November 6 and will probably ask for clarification of "contradictions" in Arab policies toward the Europeans. Drafting is said to have been extremely difficult. Presumably Paris and London are still seeking to maintain a relatively friendly tone while some other governments may be asking why the declaration of November 6 has not resulted in the easing of the Arab oil squeeze.

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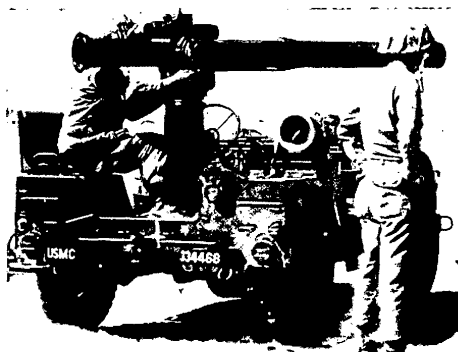
US and Soviet Weapons Systems in the Middle East



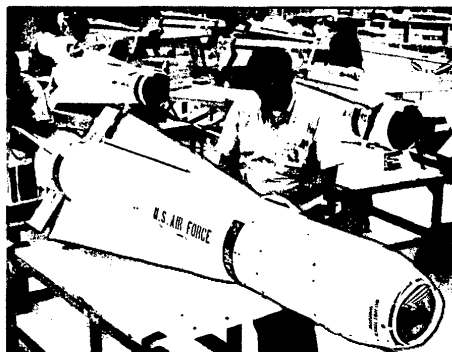
Sagger anti-tank missile



ZSU-23-4 self-propelled anti-aircraft gun



TOW anti-tank missile



Maverick air-to-surface missile

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ARAB STATES - ISRAEL

Both US and Soviet weapons systems used by Israel and the Arab states during last month's fighting were highly effective. This was particularly true of US systems supplied to Tel Aviv after the war broke out. Similarly, Soviet weapons--particularly mobile anti-tank and surface-to-air missiles--took a heavy toll of Israeli forces.

[redacted]
[redacted] US missiles--probably with characteristics similar to the TOW anti-tank missile and the Maverick air-to-surface missile--caused "serious devastation" to Egyptian armor and missile batteries.

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[redacted]

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The impressive performance of Soviet weapons in Arab hands has given Tel Aviv pause. Mobile anti-tank missiles and shoulder-fired anti-tank rockets were particularly effective against Israeli armor. [redacted]

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[redacted] many Israeli tanks sustained multiple hits from Soviet-supplied Sagger anti-tank missiles and anti-tank rockets.

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[redacted] difficulty with surface-to-air missile systems, particularly the mobile SA-6s and SA-7s. Many Israeli planes were brought down by these two systems as well as by fire from conventional anti-aircraft artillery--especially the self-propelled ZSU-23-4--encountered while trying to avoid the SAMs.

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CHINA

A new political campaign is gathering momentum which could have implications for one or more of China's leaders. The ancient philosopher Confucius is being severely criticized for a number of crimes that clearly have current relevance, and it seems likely that the drive is intended to discredit and possibly purge someone in the present leadership. The party's theoretical journal also seemed to lay the groundwork for a new political campaign this month when it called on party members to unite for a common objective and to speak out against those who still bear grudges. This may be a reference to unbending radicals such as Mao's wife, Chiang Ching.

Controversy meanwhile has developed over high-level government appointments prior to the National People's Congress, which is charged with ratifying the appointments.

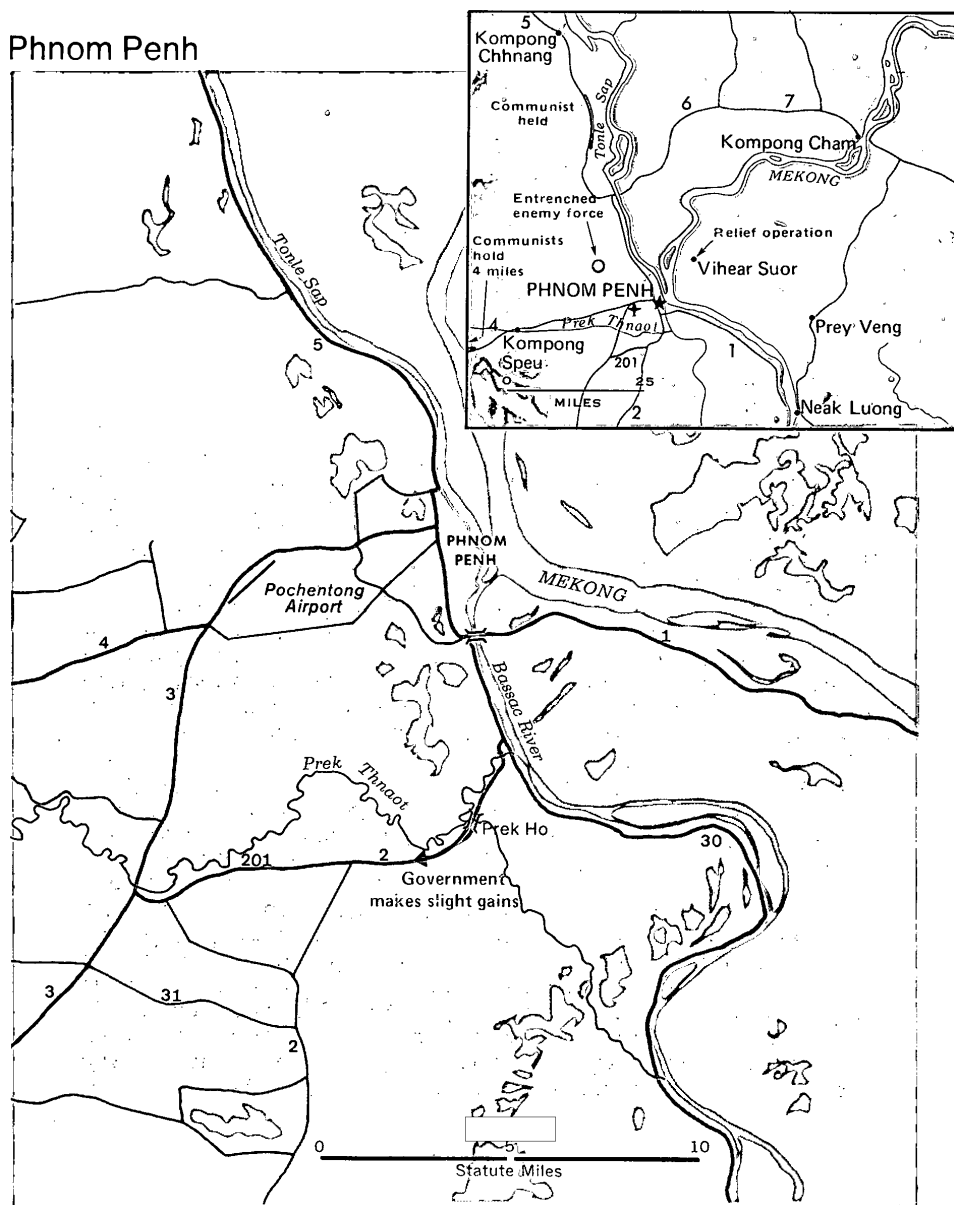
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disputes
could conceivably force a postponement of the Congress apparently slated for later this month.

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Phnom Penh



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CAMBODIA

The Khmer Communists are once again tightening their hold over Phnom Penh's overland supply lines. Early this week they struck at government outposts along Route 4 west of Kompong Speu and now control a four-mile section of the highway there. The insurgents also are adding to the force holding an 11-mile stretch of Route 5 northwest of the capital, and will try to expand their control southward.

South of Phnom Penh, government forces recently regained some territory along Route 2 and the Prek Thnaot River, where Communist units have apparently withdrawn temporarily. On the city's northwestern front, government units have been unable to dislodge well-entrenched rebels within ten miles of Phnom Penh's airport. Ten miles northeast of the capital, approximately 1,300 Cambodian Army troops are involved in a fresh drive to relieve Vihear Suor, an isolated market town.

Radio messages between Communist units on the east bank of the Mekong River contain persistent complaints about ammunition shortages. A message last week showed that regional insurgent leaders were planning to meet with "the Vietnamese" and would "seek additional equipment from them." Despite the ammunition problem, a message of November 13 called on Communist units southeast of Phnom Penh to launch attacks against government positions along Route 1 in early December.

New Divisional Equipment at Birobidzhan



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NOTES

USSR-China: Combat equipment, apparently for a new Soviet motorized rifle division, has shown up in [redacted] Birobidzhan on the far eastern border with China. The equipment began arriving early this year, but thus far only one-fifth of the vehicles and equipment a division would need is in place. It is not yet clear whether the new division will become a fully equipped, active unit, or will remain in its current role--primarily storage--to be fleshed out in the event of increased tension. The Soviets last sent a new division to their frontier with China in early 1972.

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South Korea: The student demonstrations against the Pak regime, which began in early October, have spread to all major universities and a number of other schools. While most of the demonstrations have been small scale and confined to the campuses, they reveal a degree of organization, activism and student unrest that have not been evident during the past two years. The government apparently intends to ride out the protests without using undue force and is confident that it can control the situation. The winter vacation in early December provides a convenient cooling off period, and the government may dismiss the students early. However, student agitation may be rekindled when classes resume in the spring.

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West Germany - Czechoslovakia: The optimism Bonn was expressing last week that signature of a "reconciliation" treaty with Czechoslovakia and the establishment of diplomatic relations were imminent has evaporated. After reportedly agreeing to portions of a West German compromise for handling the legal affairs of West Berlin institutions, Prague informed Bonn that the plan was unacceptable because it called for an exchange of letters giving specific rather than tacit consent as Foreign Minister Scheel had arranged in Moscow. The Czechs have suggested postponing the issue and going ahead with the establishment of diplomatic ties, but Bonn has rejected this. The Germans fear they might lose leverage they need to secure equal treatment for West Germany and West Berlin in legal matters.

West Germany: Bonn registered a \$1.6 billion trade surplus in September, raising the cumulative surplus for the first nine months to \$8.7 billion. This is more than double the level for the comparable period of 1972. Although trade declined in August as a result of seasonal factors, it rebounded in September with exports up 63 percent and imports 40 percent. Exports probably will continue at high levels in the remaining months of the year, contributing to an annual trade surplus likely to reach a record level of at least \$12 billion. A surplus of \$250 million in trade with the US accounted for one-sixth of West Germany's total surplus in September. The nine-month surplus with the US reached nearly \$1 billion and is likely to approach \$1.5 billion for the entire year.

Uganda: A Soviet ship unloaded ten T-34 medium tanks, six armored personnel carriers, and ammunition in Kenya for Uganda between November 3 and 8. This is the first Soviet military aid in five years. The delivery may be part of a \$10 million agreement concluded in 1965; this deal was suspended when relations deteriorated and Soviet military technicians were withdrawn in February 1971.

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